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ABSTRACT

While many states are considering mandating Competency Based Teacher Education (CBTE), certain basic problems should be addressed before official action is taken. Some confusion exists over the exact definition of CBTE and how a state views teacher education will affect the thrust of CBTE programs. The selection of competencies and the determination of how the competencies will be measured are two significant issues. The first problem is essentially a matter of public policy to be resolved at the state and local levels. The measurement problem is more difficult since the tools needed to provide objective information for truly accurate measurement do not exist. The source of funding for CBTE programs is another factor that must be considered. Providing technological support for these programs is another problem that will have to be solved at the state level if CBTE is to become a requirement for accreditation for schools of education. (JD)

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A Position Statement

# Implementing Performance-Based Teacher Education At The State Level

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# IMPLEMENTING PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

*A position statement including recommendations by the Performance-Based Teacher Education Committee of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. This statement has the endorsement of the Association's Board of Directors.*

June 1973

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 610
Washington, D. C. 20036

This paper was prepared pursuant to a contract with the United States Office of Education, through the Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas. The opinions expressed herein are those of the AACTE Board of Directors and the AACTE Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education and should not be construed as representing the opinions of the United States Government or the Texas Education Agency.

## IMPLEMENTING PERFORMANCE-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION AT THE STATE LEVEL

Many state legislatures are now considering laws related to performance-based (competency-based) teacher education (PBTE). In fact, several such laws have already been passed. Because of the complexity of issues involved in such policy decisions and because of the unique nature of the AACTE (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education) Committee on Performance-Based Teacher Education, the Committee feels it is appropriate to present its observations to those who are responsible for developing educational policies.

For the past three years this Committee, composed of teachers, college personnel, school administrators, state education department representatives, and a student, has studied performance education. Its activities have included sponsoring a number of national and regional workshops and the publication of 12 PBTE monographs with an average circulation of 5,000 copies each.

The Committee recognizes the enthusiasm with which many persons are responding to the ideas inherent in performance-based teacher education. The PBTE strategy is gaining widespread support because it is based on an obvious and seemingly simple premise (teachers should be competent) and it relates directly to a broad thrust for accountability which touches all aspects of government. But, the issues surrounding PBTE are not simple.

The Committee continues to believe that PBTE has considerable potential for the improvement of teaching in both colleges and public schools. PBTE directs the energies of those responsible for preparation and staff development to two basic issues: (1) What should schools for our society be like?, and (2) What should teachers be able to do in such schools? In answering these questions attention necessarily must be given to more and better research, research which relates the education of teachers with the subsequential education of children and youth.

PBTE is an emerging concept. There is no one form of PBTE, and the Committee recognizes the existence of varying viewpoints. Certain basic problems, however, must be addressed whenever a state considers adopting a legal policy toward performance education. These include:

### DEFINITION

Confusion exists over exactly what PBTE is. Many people see PBTE as involving programs which are characterized by a set of conditions found in the components of the programs. Others believe that objective measurement is the only essential element. Between these extremes, other variations exist. How a state views teacher education will certainly affect its definition. Some people emphasize the training experiences required before certification and/or employment. Others perceive teacher education as a career-long development and that distinctions that presently exist between preservice and inservice should disappear.

Clearly it is essential that each state seek to clarify its understanding and establish its own definition of PBTE, and proceed in accordance with its own situation and need.

COMPETENCIES

The selection of competencies and the determination of how the competencies will be measured are two significant issues. The first problem is essentially a matter of public policy to be resolved at the state and local levels. The measurement problem is more difficult since the tools needed to provide objective information for truly accurate measurement do not exist.

Also, little research exists yet which confirms a relationship between a given teacher competency and the learning of a child. Considerable effort is presently being expended to close both the measurement and research gaps. Evidence does not exist now, however, which would assure policy makers that mandating certain competencies would assure anyone that teachers actually possess them (the measurement problem) and that children actually learn more (the research problem). Unlike the traditional approaches to teacher education, however, PBTE, through its insistence on explicit objectives and the development of accurate measurement techniques, should in time provide the evidence to solve both the measurement and the research problems.

A related issue concerns the definition of competency. Some persons consider a competency to be a skill that a teacher is able to demonstrate before a class; others believe a competency can only be validated through a change in the behavior of children. The former focuses on the behavior of the teacher; the latter on the ultimate consequences of that behavior. Policy differences resulting from endorsing one or the other of the definitions are immense.

MONEY

Definitive studies of what PBTE programs will cost do not exist. Studies which have been done indicate that PBTE programs may be more costly. In any case, the development costs will be substantial. Industry has long recognized that development and retooling costs are high and consequently has budgeted needed funds; those responsible for providing funds for change in education usually have not.

TECHNOLOGICAL SUPPORT

PBTE, as a strategy for improvement, requires a range of support services that are not readily available. Developing new learning materials and closer relationships with the public schools will force a major shift from present programs. To make that shift, a variety of technological support systems must be available. For example, the analysis of teaching skills requires either audio and/or video recorders or staff time for personal evaluation. Either approach places a heavy burden on the present system.

PBTE forces change not only in the system of preparation but also in the people involved. Changing people is a much more difficult task than changing technical systems and funds must be allocated for staff development.

It is very difficult in a short document to express fully the variety of concerns related to these issues. The Committee would be pleased to share with any interested persons documents and papers related to the above.

Based on its three years of study, the Committee offers the following recommendations:

1. *Because performance-based teacher education appears to have high potential for generating significant improvements in teacher education, its potential should not be compromised or jeopardized by undue pressure or haste.*

2. *Because performance-based teacher education appears to have high potential for generating significant improvements in teacher education, state authorities should study, encourage experimentation, and fund PBTE developmental activities.*

3. *Because the present level of knowledge about performance-based teacher education is limited, states are devised to avoid legislation which prescribes or proscribes PBTE. State education agencies are encouraged to maintain a flexible and open position regarding performance-based teacher education and performance-based teacher certification until sufficient knowledge about PBTE has been generated through experience and research.*

The potential for the improvement of the entire educational system through support for PBTE is significant. The premature pressure of a policy which ignores the problems noted above may destroy that potential. Also the rigidity that often exists in legislation and regulation makes it impossible to accommodate the shifts that should occur as more is learned about the relationships between teacher actions and the learning of children.

The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 610
Washington, D. C. 20036

Edward C. Pomeroy, Executive Director

Karl Massanari, Associate Director
and Director of AACTE's PBTE Project

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Liaison Members:

Dave Darland, Acting Director, Division of Instruction and Professional Development, NEA, 1201 16th Street, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20036

Rolf W. Larson, Director, National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, 1750 Pennsylvania Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20006

Consultant:

Charles W. Hunt, 58 Elm Street, Oneonta, New York 13820

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Paul Varg, Professor of History, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan 48823

Liaison Representatives:

Theodore Andrews, Associate in Teacher Education, Division of Teacher Education and Certification, New York State Department of Education, Albany, New York 12204 (Multi-State Consortium)

Norman Dodl, Associate Professor, Department of Elementary Education, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306 (Elementary Education Model Program Directors)

Harlan Ford, Assistant Commissioner of Education ( or Tom Ryan) Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas 78701

Norman Johnson, Chairman, Department of Education, North Carolina Central University, Durham, North Carolina 27707 (Southern Consortium)

Kyle Killough, Director, Texas Education Renewal Center, 6504 Tracor Lane, Austin, Texas 78721 (Texas Teacher Center Project)

Donald Orlosky, Professor of Education and Associate Director of Leadership Training Institute, University of South Florida, Tampa, Florida 33620

Benjamin Rosner, University Dean of Teacher Education, Office of Teacher Education, the City University of New York, 1411 Broadway, Room 1119, New York, New York 10018 (Task Force '72 Committee on National Program Priorities in Teacher Education)

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